

VZCZCXRO8756

RR RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHHM RUEHLH RUEHLN RUEHMA RUEHPB
RUEHPOD RUEHPW RUEHTM RUEHTRO
DE RUEHNE #0828/01 1142020
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 242020Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6349
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RUEHC/DEPT OF INTERIOR WASHDC
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUETIAA/DIRNSA FT GEORGE G MEADE MD
RUEAEPA/EPA WASHDC
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHMFISS/HQ USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHMFIUU/NGIC INTEL OPS CHARLOTTESVILLE VA
RUCPDC/NOAA NMFS WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUEHFR/UNESCO PARIS FR

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 000828

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR OES/PCI, OES/STC, OES/SAT, OES/EGC, AND SCA/INS
STATE FOR STAS
DOE FOR INTERNATIONAL
INTERIOR FOR FWS RILEY
STATE PASS TO NSF FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SENV TSPL TBIO ECON SOCI KSCA KGHG IN

SUBJECT: NEW DELHI EST OFFICE HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 20 TO
APRIL 24, 2009

REF A: NEW DELHI 802

REF B: 08 NEW DELHI 3104

11. (U) Below is a compilation of environment, science, and
technology highlights from Embassy New Delhi for the week of April
20-24, 2009, including the following:

-- Tiger Deaths in Madhya Pradesh - Poaching on the Rise
-- EST Section Celebrates Earth Day
-- Famous Tiger Gets Lifetime Achievement Award
-- Insight into Fight Against Drug Resistant Bacteria
-- Transforming Biology Research in India
-- India Unveils New Disaster Warning Kiosk

ENVIRONMENT

Tiger Deaths in Madhya Pradesh - Poaching on the Rise

12. (SBU) Over a three month period between January 3 and April 4, 2009, five adult tigers have been killed in Kanha Tiger Reserve and one in Pench Tiger Reserve. Madhya Pradesh (MP) Forest Department officials claim all six deaths were due to tigers killing each other due to shrinking habitat and lack of space for tiger dispersal. The Forest Department is now working with the Wildlife Trust of India to check habitat loss and secure forest corridors to provide sufficient room for park tiger populations. However, an EST section contact, who is one of India's foremost wildlife crime investigators and based in MP, suspects botched attempts at poaching as the cause of death in some of the cases. Since January 2009, MP forest officials in the two parks have found a total of eight abandoned tiger cubs,

all under four months of age, from three separate locations. The three mothers have never been found and tiger cubs have no value for Indian poachers engaged in the international illegal wildlife trade.

The cubs that were found alive were transferred to local zoos. Our contact claims wildlife management in Madhya Pradesh has become "a joke" and that poaching is once again on the rise.

EST Section Celebrates Earth Day

¶3. (U) Acting ESTCouns spoke before a crowd of 300 high school students on the subject of climate change and environmental activism at the Indian National Science Academy. The event was coordinated through the GLOBE program's Youth Forum on Climate Change and Global Warming. The GLOBE program has located its regional office for Asia- Pacific in New Delhi and this appears to have reinvigorated the program in India. The Earth Day event brought together school children from all over India who were engaged and well-informed on the subject of climate change and were far more interested in American leadership on the issue than historical responsibility. In addition to the speaking event, the EST section issued Ref A on Earth Day describing Embassy New Delhi's green initiatives.

Famous Tiger Gets Lifetime Achievement Award

¶4. (SBU) The UK-based Tour Operators for Tigers (TOFT) is awarding a Lifetime Achievement Award to Machli, a famous female tiger at Ranthambhore National Park (RNP). The twelve year old tiger has had nine cubs and press reports she has been spotted by over 100 million tourists including dignitaries such as President Clinton and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. She was also captured on film fighting an

NEW DELHI 00000828 002 OF 003

adult crocodile (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uYC_R-tsREU&N_R=1) and is one of the most photographed tigers in the world according to P.K. Sen, former director of the Government of India's Project Tiger. Rajasthan Chief Wildlife Warden R.N. Mehrotra will receive the award on Machli's behalf at a small ceremony at the New Delhi British High Commissioner's residence on April 24. EST section contact and TOFT member Balendu Singh, who runs a hotel near RNP, said the award was designed to improve relations between park officials and TOFT noting the difficulty tour operators have faced in working with Rajasthan Forest Department officials and local authorities.

SCIENCE

Insight into Fight Against Drug Resistant Bacteria

¶5. (U) Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mumbai, reported in the Physics Review letters their identification through simulation studies of a possible bacterial cell division mechanism that could be exploited to fight drug-resistant bacteria. The team found a protein molecule called the "Z-ring" that appears to be responsible for generating a contractile force from inside a bacterium which causes cleavage at mid-cell and cell division. Disrupting the Z-ring and thus preventing the cell from dividing could result in a new strategy for dealing with bacteria resistant to antibiotics which primarily act by rupturing the bacterial cell wall.

Transforming Biology Research in India

¶6. (U) During a keynote address at the Shriram Institute for Industrial Research, Department of Biotechnology (DBT) Secretary Dr. M.K. Bhan championed the need for an innovative, collaborative and cross-discipline approach to biological sciences in India and pointed to U.S. institutions like Stanford as role models. He said the overall goal of biology research in India should be to translate results into the creation and marketing of useful products. Dr. Bhan highlighted DBT's attempts to encourage this transformation through increased funding and programs including the creation of research clusters, financial incentives for returning scientists, fellowships, and post doctoral programs. ESTOff attended the event

which highlights a growing trend towards result oriented research in India.

TECHNOLOGY

India Unveils New Disaster Warning Kiosk

17. (U) An IIT Delhi team lead by Engineering Professor and EST section contact Subrat Kar, has developed a prototype multipurpose disaster warning kiosk. The project was funded by the Indian National Center for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) and is intended to disseminate INCOIS information (Ref B) to the general public, including warnings for tsunamis and cyclones as well as fishing forecasts. Professor Kar said the solar-powered kiosk includes a computer system with a flat panel display and has the capability to connect via cellular, wi-fi and dial-up networks. In an emergency, the kiosk displays a warning in the local language, sounds an alarm audible within a five kilometer range, and sends an

NEW DELHI 00000828 003 OF 003

SMS text warning to registered users.

BURLEIGH